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ON PAGE **2A**

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# France Ousts 3 Soviet Diplomats It Calls Spies

**J By PAUL LEWIS**  
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PARIS, April 2 — France expelled three Soviet diplomats today, after the disclosure that six people arrested here two weeks ago on charges of spying to obtain European space secrets were supervised by members of the Soviet Embassy.

A Foreign Ministry announcement said only that Foreign Minister Jean-Bernard Raimond summoned the Soviet Ambassador, Yakov P. Ryabov, today and told him that three members of his embassy staff must leave the country within eight days for "activities incompatible with their mission and status," a diplomatic euphemism for spying. The three diplomats were not identified.

Earlier in the day, a spokesman for Prime Minister Jacques Chirac, who has just returned from a two-day visit to Washington, had said some Soviet diplomats were certain to be expelled as a result of the new spy scandal, "but doubtless not very many."

The spokesman's remarks and the low-key Foreign Ministry announcement suggest that the French Government wants to respond firmly to what it regards as Soviet provocation, while avoiding a confrontation with the Soviet leadership and reprisals against its own diplomats in Moscow.

Mr. Chirac is to visit Moscow next month for the first time since taking office. With presidential elections due early next year, the Prime Minister has a strong interest in a successful trip to bolster his image as a world statesman.

The announcement today came a few days after French officials revealed that four Frenchmen and two women of Eastern European origin had been arrested for trying to collect secret information about the motor of the Ariane space rocket, the launching vehicle used by the 13-nation European Space Consortium, and several other high-

technology projects.

These sources later said the spy ring, based in the northern French city of Rouen, had been run by Valery Konorev, a deputy air force attaché at the Soviet Embassy here, who was also identified as an official of the G.R.U., the Soviet Army's intelligence arm.

## 54 Expelled in 5 Years

French television said tonight that Mr. Konorev was among the Soviet diplomats told to leave.

The expulsions today bring to 54 the number of Soviet diplomats expelled from France in the last five years for espionage. They also confirm a pattern of widespread Soviet spying throughout Western Europe, particularly for high-technology secrets, that has led to the expulsion of about 90 Soviet citizens over the last five years.

In 1983 France told 47 Soviet diplomats to leave after accusing them of "systematically attempting to obtain scientific, technical and technological information."

Four more were expelled last year after a French garage owner in Brittany was accused of giving them information about French naval installations in the area. Shortly afterward, Italy expelled two Soviet diplomats.

In 1984 Norway expelled five Soviet diplomats after the arrest on espionage charges of Arne Treholt, former head of the Norwegian Foreign Ministry's press office. In 1985 Britain expelled a total of 30 Soviet diplomats, and last year Portugal also asked two to leave.

The biggest expulsion of Soviet diplomats in Europe occurred in 1971, when Britain accused 105 Soviet citizens of espionage and told them to leave.